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In the little town of Everett where a business calendar, which I have on my desk, was made, a teacher told me that she was afraid we would have to give up this kind of manual training. When I asked why, she said, "It results in idolatry. If you had been here the afternoon the children carried those things home to their fathers and mothers for Christmas, you would have seen that they actually worshipped the works of their own hands." Art means joy in work! I said to the teacher, "Do you think the trouble is with this kind of work, or with the way you teach other things?"

I got one of the booklets I described to you from a boy who stopped smoking cigarettes for a month in order to get money for the pictures he has used as illustrations. When his teacher offered to give it to me, he hated to give it up. How could I blame him? It is beautiful. He put his best self into it. But I wanted it. I told him I would not think of taking it from him for nothing. "If I draw you a steel cruiser under full steam right here now, will you swap?" "I will," he said.

I tell that simply to show one result of this kind of work with children. They love it. They discover that the greatest joy known to man is creative work.

It seems to me that the fine art we have in the schools at the present time, and I commend this last sentence to all, that the kind of work in the schools at the present time is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" as they are outside the school-room.

You have here the right kind of product. If we can have that kind of product all through our country, there will be no question about fine art in this country.

I asked a man in Boston who had been in the wall-paper business fifty years, "Can you see any result whatever of our teaching of fine art in the public schools?" He said, "Yes; I can still sell anything to the rich that is imported, and that is expensive; but we can no longer palm off our poor stuff on the common people; the common people, when they come to my store, bring their children with them, and the children know what is good."

## ART AND INDIVIDUALITY\*

BY IRVING K. POND, F. A. I. A.

PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

### PART II

THE artist of to-day possesses a distinct advantage over what we deem must have been the situation of the artists of the more remote and primitive periods. He of to-day can study the monuments in the light of what is known of the civilizations which brought them forth; can determine definitely wherein they have failed and wherein and why they have achieved. We have the whole realm of recorded history spread out under our eyes and can view the psychological bearing as

well as the material trend of events; and in the light of this we are, or should be, the better equipped to study our own characteristics and their relation to our times. We may be too near the picture plane—too much in the picture to determine all values accurately, but we can at least determine the general trend and fix definitely upon some of the details.

As we may, and do, determine by a comparative study of the periods of the past in what measure and how sincerely

\*A paper read at the Convention of the American Federation of Arts held at Washington, D. C., on the 16th, 17th, and 18th of May, 1911.

the art was a true expression of the period, so may we in the light of the past determine to a degree as to the sincerity and truth of our own art forms and prophesy as to their probable value as a permanent expression of our own real life. In viewing the past from our point of vantage and seeing so clearly the luminous focal spot which marks the characteristic idea of a special period; and in comparing its manifestation with that of our own, we must not, because of the seeming clearness of the vision, assume too readily that the problem then was less involved than is our own, or that life in the olden time was simple as compared with ours. The purely materialistic activities of those races and periods which have left the record of a great art were as intense as ours, and in the earlier periods life was hedged about such deep imaginings, radiant fancies and abject superstitions as to make the problem of clarification one quite commensurate with our own. True, the superstitions in a measure cloud our problem, too, but the individual of to-day has acquired or assumed no characteristic which has not inhered in human nature throughout all time. The great lesson for us lies in the fact that in the periods which have left worthy records the individual and the race took cognizance of the finer qualities and aspirations of the period and ministered to them in terms of religion and of law and in forms of art. To religion, to law, and to art, material conquest brought its choicest offerings, and idealized materialism stands at the foundation, one might say even, stands as the foundation, of religion, law, and certainly of art. What of this clear vision from the past, what of the central idea behind it? The everlastingness of nature and the immortality of the soul were fundamental concepts of the philosophy of Egypt and were echoed in its religion, in its ceremonial, in its art—every line and mass of the pyramids, of the rock tombs, of the Nile temples, is instinct with it. Intellectuality was the keynote of Grecian life and art; and philosophy and art and religion, the very gods themselves, were reduced in the retort of the human mind, and the reduction, especially as touching

literature and art, stands out marvelously pure and strong. The base, the entasis of the shaft, the volute, the entablature of the Ionic stands to-day as the highest expression of the intellectual concept of national functional beauty the world has known. Whereas Egypt ministered to the soul and Greece to the intellect, Rome enforced the materialistic aspect of life and swayed through temperamental expression of physical and material power. Rome's concept of the value of direct application of physical force and the absolute domination of material mass was clean-cut and clear, but her concept of the spiritual in art was ever clouded. Ancient Rome in many of her monuments furnished the most brutal exposition of the theory that art is merely temperamental, and that in its expression is entirely divorced from the character of the artist. Rome, Greece and Egypt held the artisan in bondage and the effect of this, too, must be remembered when considering the art forms of to-day.

The Middle Ages emerged from the turbulent slumber of the Dark Ages with a resistless energy and activity which finally struck its keynote in the aspirations of the human heart. The love of life and upward movement was the then characteristic of the individual and the race, and the great Gothic piles which stand as monuments to the unification of all the ideals of that period overpower us with their sublime conception and grip our hearts as they force upon us a realization of what individuals in a labor of love directed to a common end by a common spirit may accomplish. The expression of what lay in the heart of humanity was the achievement of medieval art. The art of the Middle Ages furnishes the sweetest and most satisfying exposition of the theory that art expression (like religion) is temperamental and entirely divorced from the personality of the artist—divorced, too, from the baser and lower instincts and characteristics of the race—and survives only as it recognizes and ministers to the higher ideals. This fact, too, it may be well for us to remember in our consideration of the trend of art to-day.

The most important influence on our present-day architecture comes through the Renaissance, which unfortunately is a mere cultural influence, avoiding deep feeling and sentiment, and contenting itself with the refinements of form. The Renaissance was a protest against the one-sided expression of the Middle Ages and looked toward a restoration of classic culture as it had come to be understood and established in Rome. What there is in our life which responds to the baneful influence of Roman Art nourished under a corrupt and degenerate empire or to the somewhat less baneful influences of an over-cultivated Renaissance remains to be determined, and if determined remains to be rooted out if we are to transmit a germ of life to the ages. Do these forms appeal to us because of our mental make-up, or are they being forced upon us by artisans—God knows they are not artists—who can read but have never learned to think, who can copy but who cannot create? Is imagination wanting in our race that we accept the prevalent art form, or are we not awake? This brings us face to face with the problem of to-day and here in America.

What are the salient points of our American civilization which may well stamp our art and give it enduring definition? Are we and how are we perverting this definition in our present practice? We are not only an individual people, but a people of individuals, of whom, by whom and for whom the present form of our governmental structure and social forms exist. What underlies it all? The doctrine that all men are free and equal before the law, that the acceptance of freedom carries with it the acceptance of responsibilities toward our neighbor and the State, that the government is not an extraneous matter, but is the expressed will of the people voiced through delegates or representatives chosen by the people and who are servants of the people. This means an internal reign of law and order, of which the people are a part, and not domination by an external power. Therefore the art forms applicable to and developed under plutocracy, monarchy or empire and made possible of

existence only under conditions of slavery cannot justly express our social or governmental life. Therefore the stately temples expressive of the ceremonial of Egypt, the Grecian forms expressive of a totally different order, the applied forms of Rome, expressive of a domineering power, cloaking and obscuring whatever of sincere endeavor the race was struggling to put forth—nothing of all this has any place in the art of to-day. If our age is sincere in its altruism, sincere in its endeavor to ameliorate the condition of the workers, sincere in its efforts toward political reform, sincere in its belief in the value of the immortal soul, sincere in its acceptance and promulgation of a religion based on brotherly love, or the brotherhood of man, sincere in its devotion to a culture which shall lie near the heart, grace the mind, and not gloss the surface merely, then this age holds no place for the extraneous application of the borrowed finery of art, but must insist on an expression of the vital principles of structure and the rational development of ornament which shall not obscure the vital thought, but which shall be of intrinsic worth in defining the character of the mass and in conferring charm upon the structure. The application in architecture of forms symbolic of Roman pomp and power, while appealing to the semi-cultured and by them communicated to the rabble, is menacing the development of a sincere art in this country. It were better for us and for the future that our office buildings, our libraries, our colleges, our public buildings should be simple affairs, as simple as sincerely designed warehouses, rather than the characterless misrepresentations of our better life which so many or most of them are. Characterless? Hardly that, for a lie has character, though the borrowed form has not!

I can bring this matter home only by citing individual instances. This I do in no spirit of personal criticism and would hesitate to do at all but that I feel keenly that the case is parallel to one in which a surgeon is called upon to cut deeply in order to save life.

In viewing the work of to-day it would seem that about the most brutal utter-

ance of an architectural untruth (and let us hope for the honor of society it is a civic misrepresentation also) is sounded forth in the new Cook County building. Forms expressive of Roman power and official domination were borrowed, transferred to Chicago, magnified and set upon a scaffolding of steel and stone to impress on the citizens an idea of the supreme power and authority residing in the Chicago Common Council and the Cook County Board! This assumption of supreme domination, backed up by brute force, is so purely gratuitous in this age of individualism and of altruism that the builders could not express the idea in any sincerity and made the structure a sham. Pedestals which are a hollow mockery, columns which carry nothing, and a self-supporting entablature which is a farce—the whole thing is the utterance of an unmitigated falsehood.

The most subtle utterance of an architectural untruth (and let us hope for the honor of commerce and industry that it, also, is a misrepresentation) is sounded forth in the new gas building in Chicago. It is called the People's (?) gas building—save the mark! Roman forms most ostentatiously expressive of pomp and power were borrowed, transported to Chicago and introduced into the lower stories of this great commercial building. The columns are not integral with the mass, are set up for a theatrical display and could be removed without disturbing the structure. And, further, the terra cotta cloaking of the overhanging skeleton of steel simulates granite and is of dimensions disproportionate to the work to be performed were the nobler material really employed. This is the supremest exaggeration of a type of building which is being made to symbolize the commercial spirit of Chicago and of America, and if the type is truly symbolic of our commercial life the nation is as surely doomed as was the Roman Empire, as were the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. This particular building is most insidious in its appeal because of the richness and brilliancy of the design. Other types there are which are pitiable.

In the center of the financial district a

bank building is now rising which utters about the most ludicrous architectural untruth sounded forth in present days. The great polished granite drums of the shafts are "cored" and slipped down over the steel verticals of the structure while upon the polished surface of the stone are to be pinned ornaments of bronze—all expressive of a crude and pompous disregard of facts absolutely at variance, let us firmly believe, with the character of the commercial life to be carried on within the walls.

I might add to this list the building for the State Educational Bureau, now under construction at Albany. This building with its untruthful mask is nearly as brutal as is the first example cited and nearly as ludicrous as is the third, and it is designed to express—at least to house—the highest educational and cultural influence of the Empire State! Is the character of this influence denoted truly? Other examples in Chicago, in New York, in Pittsburg, in San Francisco, in all our great cities, could be cited.

I am not speaking just here of those buildings designed for banks, theaters, churches, schools, factories, etc., which seem to be cut off by the rod from some interminable Roman colonnade and in which the column is used functionally. In my opinion these buildings are stupid, inexpressive of their purpose and of the age and wanting in imagination. This may be merely a personal opinion—but as to the cases cited there can be but one judgment—they are false. We have no record of such prostitution of art even in the most debased Roman period. If such examples did exist they were of those accidentals and incidentals which time has so kindly wiped away, and we may safely prophesy the same happy fate for the modern structures.

Are these examples expressions of individual temperament merely, or are they characteristic of a general tendency? If the former, there is need of a rebirth within the individual; if the latter, there is manifestly a widespread decadence which can only presage a not very remote downfall. The excuse presented is that

the strenuous urging of circumstances permits the artist no time for reflection and forces him to use the every-day and well-tried formulæ. But the real reason is that the age is wanting in the finer sensibilities which crave the art expression, having devoted itself to commerce, to science and to constructive altruism. Other commercial ages have felt the true art impulse. The truths of science should not overshadow the truths of art, while constructive altruism should be counted on to instill correct principles of life, and even the ordered expression of those principles. A great work is laid down for the teachers of ethics and for the schools of ethics and of esthetics when they turn from the pedantry of culture and a contemplation of the traditions of the past to study in all humility and sincerity the nature and application of the laws of truth and beauty.

The true characteristic of our American life seems to be a devotion to the humanities; and the temples we erect to it are the schools, the hospitals, the asylums, the settlement houses, the workshops, the mercantile buildings, the churches, and the homes. Our government buildings should embody the essence of all these. To the artist who rightly apprehends the interrelationship of the intellectuality, the spirituality, and the ideality inhering in these types, there opens up the possibility of leaving the indelible impress of his individuality on the art expression of his time and to adding

his increment and its increment to the ultimate expression of his race; but to this end the artist needs the assistance and inspiration of the unconfused utterance of communal and national ideals.

It seems impossible that, with all our background, with all our sources of knowledge and all our opportunities for consistent upward development we are as individuals and as a race devoid of high idealism in art. It seems impossible that these examples I have cited, and which seem to mark a general tendency, are more than superficial trappings which indeed do not "denote us truly." If they are us then we are in another dark period of history. If we really are, as individuals and as a race, sincere in our ideality, then time will wipe away these manifestations, as accidentals and incidentals, as scaffolds, in more meanings than one, from which we are building the image of our better self, and which having been built, shall endure.

Our salvation in art will come when having proved that we are capable of self-government, that we have conceived, have developed and can maintain permanently and justly and orderly a government of the people, by the people, for the people, we realize that this is but one form of our individual expression, and that the social, the ethical, and the esthetic phases are just as expressive of us and as much a part of us, and just as much to be developed along individual lines as is our governmental form.

## AMERICA AT ROME

BY HARRISON S. MORRIS

COMMISSIONER GENERAL FROM THE UNITED STATES TO THE ROMAN ART EXPOSITION

IT is perhaps unique in the annals of foreign art expositions that the United States should appropriate a sum for the erection of a building to house the creations of its artists. At Paris in 1900 America had galleries assigned it in the

palace provided by France. The various nations who contributed their art to the Expositions at Chicago and St. Louis were hospitably welcomed into the art structures erected by those cities. Not since 1900 at Paris has America exhibited of-